



# EOSDIS

NASA'S EARTH OBSERVING SYSTEM  
DATA AND INFORMATION SYSTEM

# Earthdata Search UX Lessons Learned

## ESIP 2019

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# 5 Lessons Learned

- You can't please everyone
- Golden paths simplify complexities
- UX is often dictated by underlying systems
- Screen real estate is expensive
- Nothing beats live user testing

# You can't please everyone

- Users have opinions, and they often don't align
- Users are all coming from different places, literally and figuratively
- Recommendation:
  - Design to the 80% rule
  - Industry standards
  - Add multiple paths/options, but don't over-complicate things

# Golden paths simplify complexities

- Workflows make complicated processes easier
- EDSC assumes a user follows a general search > discovery > configure > download process
- EDSC doesn't *force* a specific workflow
- Recommendation:
  - Encourage users to go down a golden path by making that path easy to follow
  - Allow users to escape at each step if necessary

# UX dictated by underlying systems

- Interacting with legacy systems is usually required, but never fun
- User expectations have *dramatically* changed with the proliferation of cutting edge tech
- Recommendation:
  - Move as much as you can to modern systems
  - Decouple live tasks/actions from slow endpoints

# Screen real estate is expensive

- Exposing all data and metadata does not work
- Users can become paralyzed with too many options to choose from
- Constrained panels do not work
- Recommendation:
  - Understand what your users need at each point of your application

# Nothing beats live user testing

- No design survives first contact with the user
- Spectrum of understanding always amazes
- Product teams can be susceptible to confirmation bias
- Recommendation:
  - Find opportunities to put your application in front of a user *who has never used it before* and watch them try to complete a task.

# Lessons Applied

- EDSC Governance Group discusses, product team makes final decision.
- End-to-End Services brings discovery and customization closer than ever.
- Actively moving information from Legacy Services calls to tags and scheduled background tasks.
- Reverting back to (better) vertical panels



# Questions?

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